MOTHER EARTH

Vol. IX. MARCH, 1914 No. 1

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Office: 74 West 119th Street, New York City
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FROM THE COLLECTION OF
JOSEPH ISHILL

MOTHER EARTH

Monthly Magazine Devoted to Social Science and Literature
Published Every 15th of the Month

EMMA GOLDMAN, Proprietor, 74 West 119th Street, New York, N. Y.
ALEXANDER BERKMAN, Editor

Entered as second-class matter April 9, 1906, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Vol. IX **MARCH, 1914** **No. 1**

TO OUR FRIENDS

WHEN, eight years ago, MOTHER EARTH was started on the road of life, equipped with the munificent sum of $250, the originators little dreamed what difficulties the venture would entail. Imbued with the zeal of idealism, but without practical experience, they believed that all a publication of this character needs is revolutionary fire and literary ability, and the rest would follow. So they began their task with joy in their hearts and a song upon their lips.

And now eight years have passed. What these years have meant is more than can be told in our limited space. Some day we may write the history of MOTHER EARTH. It will surely prove interesting reading.

For the present it is sufficient to say that each year meant a grind, an endless grind. On more than one occasion it seemed as if we could not go on, and often our efforts looked like a useless waste of energy.

For one thing, the original purpose of gathering brave spirits who could find no expression in other periodicals, has not materialized. Partly because brave spirits are scarce in this wide land; partly because those who are brave often cannot write, and mainly because those who are brave and can write, are compelled to write for money. MOTHER EARTH is too poor to pay, and because it is bent upon keeping up its standard of revolutionary spirit and quality, the task of filling the magazine has fallen to a few who, though burdened with other labors, have to supply both brains and skill to make the magazine readable.

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One difficulty carries many in its trail. Because of the determination never to compromise, never to lose sight of the ideal, MOTHER EARTH has made slow headway in regard to increasing the number of its subscribers. Most people merely dabble in radicalism, especially when it costs nothing. But the average American who pays $1.00 subscription, wants to "get his money's worth," which usually means that he wants to own and control the object paid for. And as he rarely knows just what he wants, he expects his magazine to discover his needs for him, and to supply them in a manner not to shock his nerves or disturb his digestive powers. For this he is not to be blamed; the home, the school, the pulpit, the theatre, and the press of this country have been consistently feeding the average American on nothing but the most tasteless and colorless food. It would be expecting almost the superhuman of him to make the leap from the daily papers and trashy magazines to MOTHER EARTH, and survive the feat.

Under the circumstances, MOTHER EARTH has had to sail in heavy seas. No sooner would the magazine pull out from the shallowness of ideas and spirit, when it would strike a gale of condemnation, censorship, and persecution that often menaced its very existence. Added to this has been the drain on MOTHER EARTH by the necessity of establishing an Anarchist library, among the books published being PRISON MEMOIRS OF AN ANARCHIST, by Alexander Berkman, ANARCHISM AND OTHER ESSAYS, by Emma Goldman, numerous pamphlets, also the forthcoming publication of VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE'S SELECTED WORKS, and THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MODERN DRAMA, by Emma Goldman.

Eight years have thus passed. MOTHER EARTH, now older and wiser, has lost nothing of its fighting spirit nor of its determination to forge ahead, to go on in its uncompromising agitational and educative work.

"Break—break it open; let the knocker rust;
Consider no 'shalt not'; nor no man's 'must';
And, being entered, promptly take the lead,
Setting aside tradition, custom, creed;
Nor watch the balance of the huckster's beam;
Declare your hardiest thought, your proudest dream."

EMMA GOLDMAN,
ALEXANDER BERKMAN,
BEN. L. REITMAN.

P. S.—Friends, if MOTHER EARTH has survived it is due to you, the faithful few; to you who have given of your meager means gladly and generously; to you who have helped us gain new friends; to you who have sent us hope and cheer in moments of our despair. It is therefore to you we come on the birth of our new year, feeling confident of your renewed help.

You can aid in many ways: First, if you have not already done so, send in your renewal at once. We offer as a premium, with each yearly renewal, a copy of Tolstoy's THE FRUITS OF CULTURE, or NEWS FROM NOWHERE, by William Morris.

For a renewal for two years, we will give a cloth copy of ANARCHISM AND OTHER ESSAYS, by Emma Goldman, and THE MESSAGE OF ANARCHY, by Jethro Brown; or KING HUNGER, by Andreyev.

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MOTHER EARTH.

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THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR

BY VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE

Hark! Low down you will hear
The storm in the underground!
Listen, Tyrants, and fear!
Quake at that muffled sound!

"Heavens, that mocked our dust,
Smile on, in your pitiless blue!
Silent as you are to us,
So silent are we to you!

"Churches that scourged our brains!
Priests that locked fast our hands!
We planted the torch in your chains:
Now gather the burning brands!

"States that have given us LAW,
When we asked for THE RIGHT TO EARN BREAD!
The Sword that Damocles saw
By a hair swings over your head!

"What ye have sown ye shall reap:
Teardrops, and Blood, and Hate,
Gaunt gather before your Seat,
And knock at your palace gate!

"There are murderers on your Thrones!
There are thieves in your Justice-halls!
White Leprosy cancers their stones,
And gnaws at their worm-eaten walls!

"And the Hand of Belshazzar's Feast
Writes over, in flaming light,
Thought's Kingdom no more to the Priest;
Nor the Law of Right unto Might."

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

IN the whole history of this country there has never perhaps been witnessed a popular movement of deeper meaning and more far-reaching potential effect than the raiding of churches by the unemployed of New York.

Its very spontaneity is of utmost consequence. No so-called leaders suggested or organized the crusade against churches. It sprang from the midst of the unemployed themselves, prompted by the need of the moment—the best evidence of wholesomeness, of initiative and daring action.

The most active in this movement are a new, young element, youths of rebellious spirit and imagination, workingmen without a job, men who in the struggle of life have developed a sensitive social consciousness. They are intelligent workers, too self-respecting for charity; they scorn begging no less than stealing; full well they realize their right to work under decent conditions or, in the absence of work, their preëminent right to food and shelter, to life.

The significance of this movement is far greater than is perhaps apparent. It is no mere denial of kingly prerogative of imposing taxes without representation; it is nothing so superficial as the demand for a fictitious "equality," be it at the polls, before the law, or in the arena of the social struggle. The roots of this crusade go deeper: it challenges the justice of the established; it denies the right to starve; it attacks the supremacy of the law; it strikes at the very foundation of THINGS AS THEY ARE by refusing to recognize the sacredness of private property, and of authority, be it human or divine.

* * *

THAT the unemployed should start their raids first on the churches is entirely logical. The beginning of truth is tearing off the mask of hypocricy. The churches claim to serve God, the God who directed the rich man to share with the poor even to the last garment; the God who consorted with the lowliest of the low, with publicans and sinners, and whose sainted disciples were poverty-stricken fishermen, outcasts and prostitutes.

What more natural for the homeless and hungry than to seek shelter and food in the places dedicated to the

service of the Nazarene, himself a poor workingman, a carpenter, mostly out of a job, and often hungry and homeless?

Nothing could have given the churches the lie more effectively than the stand taken by them with regard to the unemployed movement. A few Protestant churches, entered by the homeless, did but with ill grace conceal their discomfort at the proximity of those whom the Lord called his most beloved children. They summoned what little diplomacy they could to hide the scorn and hatred that raged within the hearts of the servants of Him who was all love. But it was left to the Catholic Church to reveal the wolf's teeth beneath its meek lamb exterior. The St. Alphonsus Church, visited by Frank Tannenbaum and his fellow unemployed, prepared a most dastardly trap for the hungry men, in veritable Jesuitical manner. Taking advantage of the very orderly and peaceable character of the men, the priests invited them back to the church after the greater part of them had left on being requested to do so. When about two hundred of the homeless had again assembled in the church, sitting quietly in the pews, the "holy fathers" telephoned for the police, meanwhile permitting no one to leave the church, till all had been arrested and dragged off to prison.

If for no other reason, the unemployed crusade has justified its existence and accomplished a great deal by exposing the lying face of churchianity to the sight of all decent men and women.

* * *

THE spirit animating this unemployed crusade is best evidenced by the action of Frank Tannenbaum in the matter of his arrest. As one of the more intelligent and active men in this movement, the police authorities had selected him as their special victim. The courts, faithfully subservient to the interests of the masters, set Tannenbaum's bail at the outrageous sum of $7,500. The purpose, of course, was to create the impression that the young man is a most dangerous character, guilty of some heinous offense, though even the charge of disorderly conduct could not be substantiated against him, were he to have fair play.

Contrary to the expectations of the court, Tannenbaum found friends ready to supply the extravagant sum demanded as his bail. But when the young man was informed that he could not continue his work for the unemployed while out on bail, he refused to remain at liberty, and returned to prison in order to share the fate of his comrades.

This is the spirit that animates the movement of the unemployed. It is the spirit of high idealism, of willing martyrdom for a great cause, that no amount of oppression and persecution can stifle. All history bears witness to it. It is the spirit that compels the admiration of the world, and that ultimately conquers.

Imbued with this spirit the unemployed and the homeless, aided and encouraged by every one possessing the least spark of humanity, will bravely continue the work in hand, ever stronger voicing their right to life, ever louder demanding, and insisting on having, whatever food, raiment, shelter and joy are necessary to the well-being of each and all.

* * *

THERE may be significance in the circumstance that the unemployed crusade, bearing the spiritual germ of a social revolution, has originated in the month of March.

March is the *red month* in the modern history of Europe. Great events took place in the month of March. The fires of social and economic revolution repeatedly swept through Europe, in the red month of the proletariat.

March 18th and 19th are memorable in the history of Prussia. On barricades the people fought the hireling army of the government; the March storm shook the throne of the king.

The revolution spread through Germany, Austria and France. Everywhere the people learned the lesson of their solidaric power.

Twenty-three years later another March storm swept the rotten foundations of society—the Paris Commune. On the 18th of March, 1871, the proletariat of Paris rebelled against the dictatorship of Thiers who had attempted to force a new monarchy upon France, still bleeding from the wounds made by German bayonets.

It was no mere political uprising. It was a revolution seeking social and economic reconstruction, on the basis of individual liberty and social communism.

It was the stupid respect for property that finally caused the fall of the Commune, as it had caused previous revolutions to fail. But the Commune taught the great lesson that a revolution, to be successful, must first of all destroy the very basis of all tyranny—its material existence. Revolutionists must emancipate themselves from old traditions, from reverence for stolen property, from bourgeois moral notions.

May the lessons of the past guide us in the coming storms of March.

* * *

EIGHT years ago, this month, there died, while on a lecture tour in Cleveland, Ohio, one of the pioneers of Communist Anarchism in America—John Most.

To the younger generation in the radical movement of this country John Most may be but a name. Yet he was a most important factor in the revolutionary movement of the last two decades of the XIX Century. A man of strong personality, perseverant and energetic, he exercised tremendous influence upon the revolutionary movement of his time, both in Europe and in America. An effective agitator and incisive writer, he labored indefatigably to popularize the ideas of revolutionary Socialism, and later on of Communist Anarchism.

Persecution and frequent imprisonment could not daunt the spirit of Most. The greater part of his life he passed on the firing line, braving danger, prison and exile. Even the lukewarmness of former revolutionists, and the misunderstanding of close friends—the hardest to bear—were powerless to dampen the indomitable spirit of Most. Backed by numbers or isolated, he unswervingly persevered in his life work, prompted by a passionate hatred of all tyranny and oppression, always inspired by his boundless love of humanity.

He was the teacher, friend and inspiration of many revolutionists and Anarchists who have continued to carry the gospel of the Better Day to the masses. His name will find an honored niche in the history of the Social Revolution.

THERE are still rare specimens of men extant who sincerely believe that the law exists for the purpose of preventing and punishing crime. Such folk go blindly through life. No amount of experience can educate them out of traditional beliefs and established superstitions.

Such persons revere Law as the awesome Spirit of some vague, indefinable Power that holds human society intact, regulates the affairs of men and guards the portals of life itself.

Strange indeed, when a little reflection would convince any unprejudiced mind that, far from preventing crime, Law is—in its very essence—the main source of crime, the inexhaustible fountain that sprays a thousand poisons through the veins of man.

In truth, there is no crime, be it ever so atrocious, that one may not commit, provided it is done legally, legitimately, within the Law.

The most vicious, savage crime of the individual pales into insignificance when compared with the wholesale slaughter, the daily maiming and crippling, the constant grinding of human flesh and blood into gold, carried on under the name of industry and commerce, with the sanction and support of the Law.

Can the wildest fancy imagine a crime more heinous, a soul torture more hellish, than the robbing of poor widows and orphans of the pennies accumulated by years of hardest toil, of miserable living and incredible self-abnegation? Yet any good, law-abiding citizen may safely and legitimately induce the poor widow or ragged worker to entrust him with their saved pennies by merely giving them a legally worded promise to return the money.

That accomplished, the law-abiding man will be aided by the law to take advantage of the dire need of other gullible ones to loan out the widows' money at exorbitant rates, to speculate with the funds entrusted to him, or simply to appropriate them to his own use. He may cheat, rob and despoil his trusting depositors of the savings of a lifetime; he may reduce them to starvation, and play every trick imaginable to avoid repayment, as long as he keeps within the protecting shadow of legal subtleties.

Would that the ever and again duped ones for once ignore the hide-and-seek game of legality, and make a direct, personal demand for an accounting from the blood-suckers of the Henry Siegel Bank stamp.

* * *

IT is not often that a man grown rich through the labor of others is big enough to admit that property is robbery. Such a man was Joseph Fels, who died in Philadelphia on February 22d.

Mr. Fels accumulated a fortune in the manufacture of soap, but unlike his colleagues in the business of exploitation, he did not devote his time and money to the perpetuation of the system which excludes humanity from the table of life. On the contrary, he exerted his best efforts to undermine that system.

While we do not believe that Single Tax is a panacea for social and economic wrongs, we know that it has among its adherents sincere and zealous workers who in their own way help to focus public attention on the great evils of our time.

Joseph Fels was an indefatigable worker for Single Tax, in which he believed with admirable singleness of purpose. Indeed, he died in harness, for he was about to begin a lecture tour through Texas, to propagate his ideas, when illness overtook him.

He died as he had lived, faithful to his work and purpose—a trait so rare in this money-grabbing age that it compels our respect for a man like Joseph Fels.

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We are again preparing for our annual lecture tour, and hope to meet you all. We open up in Detroit, April 3d, with several lectures; Ann Arbor, April 4th; Chicago, from April 7th-18th. We will have a course of evening lectures during that time on general topics, and an afternoon course on the Modern Drama.

Sunday, April 19th, we intend to revisit Madison. After that, Minneapolis, Des Moines, Omaha, Denver; and later on to the coast, of course.

We cannot stop, as we did on previous occasions, in many cities on the way, unless those interested will offer some guarantee. We would, therefore, like to hear from you at once. Please communicate with Dr. Ben L. Reitman, 3547 Ellis Ave., Flat C, Chicago, Ill. He will give you all the particulars about the places of meeting in Chicago, and dates for other cities.

EMMA GOLDMAN.

THE MENACE OF THE UNEMPLOYED

BY ALEXANDER BERKMAN

FOR the first time in the history of this country the unemployed are making an attempt *themselves* to solve the great problem of unemployment. The significance of the attempt cannot be overestimated, nor its results foreseen.

Hitherto the jobless man, during periods of country-wide unemployment, has been relying on the various reform and charitable agencies to find some solution, and relying, of course, in vain. For, generally speaking, there is neither any sincere and intelligent plan among the reformers, of whatever hue, to solve this great problem, nor any possibility of a thorough and final solution of unemployment within the legal and industrial boundaries of present-day capitalist society. Unemployment is no sporadic phenomenon of modern life. It is inherent in the character and mode of functioning of our industrial system. The jobless man is always with us, and industrial crises or stagnation, eliminating hundreds of thousands of workers, for a longer or shorter period, from the field of labor, are events of regular and inevitable recurrence.

The causes of unemployment are ridiculously simple, and therefore so little understood. Sociologists, political economists, and reformists have succeeded in so confusing the issue that the real facts of the problem have been all but buried beneath a mass of fictitious issues concerning the tariff, money problems, stringency of the market, and similar aberrations. Yet the fundamental causes underlying all these so-called problems and, above all, the paramount problem of constant unemployment on a comparatively small scale and periodic unemployment for great masses of workers, are only too evident. They are these: the producer, deprived of the full equivalent of his product, cannot buy the latter back. As a result, products accumulate in the hands of the non-producers, till a point is reached when a halt is called to production. Hence closed mills and factories, and men out of work.

In other words: when much food, clothing and shelter has been produced, the producer is thrown out of work

and is thus doomed to do without the very things of which we have the greatest abundance. That is to say, the more wealth the worker creates, the poorer he is; the more food on hand, the greater the starvation; the more products are being accumulated, the greater the army of the unemployed.

Surely 'tis no more simple a problem than its existence is a travesty upon all sanity or humanity.

The solution—the only possible one—consists in the producer receiving the full value of his product, or its equivalent. This involves the termination of capitalist production for *profit,* and the organization of co-operative social production for *use.*

Such a change in the very fundamentals of capitalist society is inevitable, both for reasons of social necessity as well as because of the growing class consciousness and solidarity of labor. But though inevitable, its accomplishment will require considerable time.

Meanwhile the unemployed by the hundred thousand are tramping the streets of our industrial centres, many of them homeless and hungry. What is being done in this matter by the lords of life, or by the municipal, State and national governments? Why, practically nothing. Even the labor unions, nay, even the Socialist party organs know no better solution to offer than the need of new legislation. And while new laws are being discussed, proposed, voted on and passed, then vetoed or declared unconstitutional, only to be discussed again, amended and passed, and finally found inapplicable or impossible of execution; then labor departments created and commissioners appointed to "investigate thoroughly" the whole situation and catalogue the unemployed by trade, number, nationality, sex, age and color,—while months, aye, years, pass in this graft game of high-paid politicians and reformers, what are the unemployed, hungry and homeless, to do? How are they to exist?

Something of these considerations must have pierced the hearts and minds of the unemployed of New York. At least of a number of them. They have taken the problem into their own hands. To them this question is not a matter of politics, not a party issue, nor a peg to hang some propagandistic clothes on.

To them it is the most vital question of their existence,—existence itself.

Inspired and advised by the more rebellious and intelligent in their midst, the unemployed "army," as the press refers to them, has invaded various churches to demand food and shelter. Surely, every hungry man has a right to bread; has a right to demand it, for he is entitled to it by laws more sacred than any man-made statutes—the laws of human need, of self-preservation. And whoever dare refuse a starving man bread, let him take heed. It was Marie Antoinette, if we remember right, who scorned the demand of the Paris mob when it cried for bread. She probably regretted her hauteur when that same "mob" took her head in exchange.

"Give us bread!" cry the starving of New York. The cry re-echoes throughout the country—the ominous cry that has menaced the masters ever since King Hunger was born, the King whose gaunt specter makes pope and potentate tremble, shakes thrones, breaks scepters, and demolishes civilizations, root and branch.

"Give us bread!" resounds the cry in New York. Not in the spirit of meek pleading for charity, as of yore. Nay, this time, thanks to the revolutionary consciousness of the more intelligent element among the unemployed—the first time in the history of this land—the cry is not a plea but a demand, a demand backed by the determination of self-respecting manhood. For these modern crusaders realize that they are part and parcel of the great body of the world's producers, to whom belongs the earth and the fruit thereof,—these brave crusaders who are but the advance guard of enslaved and exploited labor, the symbol of the awakening of the international proletariat that will tear up the last stone of the last church and palace, drive out the pharisees and money changers, and sweep from the temple of humanity the "generation of vampires" and all their decayed and rotten institutions.

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DIRECT ACTION—Conscious individual or collective effort to protest against, or remedy, social conditions through the systematic assertion of the economic power of the workers.

THE PARIS COMMUNE

By VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE

THERE are times and occasions which reduce all men to direct, primitive feeling, so strong that to whatever degree of sophistication one may have trained oneself about what one ought to feel or ought not to feel, what is logical or what is not logical, reasonable or unreasonable, one is no longer able, or even disposed, to battle with the imperative mandate of the Man Within. The surge is irresistible: to the faint Reason that would offer argument, there rises up an all-silencing rebuke, a stern scorn, as of one who may in less intense moments hearken placidly and be ruled, but who now is possessed of a single sentiment and has no time for vain palavering.

To me, the commemoration of the 18th of March is one of those times. I cannot remember, at this moment, and I do not wish to remember, that I have a philosophy, a creed of any kind, to set limits upon what I feel, or to measure my passion with a yard-stick. And in speaking now, I speak simply as a human being, not as an Anarchist. For the feelings that take possession of me, when I remember what the Commune was, what it struggled to be, what its enemies have made of it, and what they did to the thousands of men, women, and little children who filled the graves, the prisons, and the exile posts of France in the Commune's name, are not at all in accord with a high and calm philosophy which looks upon the struggles of men with still, impartial eyes, and accepts successes and failures alike as part of a drama with an assured dénouement, the final liberation of all. I will not say to myself, "Can I, dare I, feel so, being an Anarchist? What right have I to feel so?" I feel, and the feeling will not be gainsaid.

I feel that there is too much of the blood of the innocent on our enemies' hands, for us to contemplate shaking them and talking of a pleasant understanding in the future. Some other time perhaps,—afterward—when things shall have been evened. Not now.

Not now, remembering the beleaguered city, Paris the Beautiful, Paris the Devoted, Paris the Eternal Rebel, set round with a foreign army and forsaken by the traitor

government of Versailles, which had neither helped her nor allowed her to help herself! And so, encompassed and deserted, and betrayed, she rose up alone under that black pall, flinging it from her, and lifting her proud face, beaded with struggle and white with purpose, and broke the fetters from her hands and feet and flung them in the traitors' teeth. Out of her darkest need, her netherest depth, her bitterest betrayal, she sought and found the strength to rise, alone and free. She sought deliverance where only deliverance can be found, within herself. And though she struggled and was conquered, she set that day a beacon light upon a hill,—a light they could not drown with all the blood they spilled.

But oh, what false colors they have given that light,—the preachers and the teachers who have miswritten history, and lied, and lied, and lied. What have they not said about the Commune? That it was a carnival of burning, of thuggery, of theft, of murder! That it was the triumph of indecency over moral order and virtue! That it was the idle, the vicious, the jealous, and the envious who made it! That it arose without an accountable reason like a great fungus out of the scum of men.

Oh, how they have lied, these pillars of society, these educators of our children! The sons and daughters of the Commune were of all walks in life, their thousands ranging through all the skilled crafts that have made Paris the art workshop of the world, through the simpler yet more necessary workers, and around the circle of labor, to the scholars, students, journalists, authors, engineers, publicists, and men of military training, but of free spirit.

If the long roll of the 3,600 prisoners taken by the butchers of Versailles were read, there would be found among them so many names decorated with honor by their very enemies, that the mere data of their biographies would make a book. There was more learning, more skill, more devotion and purity of sacrifice brought to the service of the Commune, and freely given, than her detractors ever conceived as in existence.

And their purpose was to realize that for which previous revolutions had been fought and had failed,—the independence of a people with common interests and common needs against the tyranny of an external force,

organized for the purpose of drawing blood and treasure from them in the name of their defense.

In the name of protection and defense, the government of Versailles had taxed them, deserted them, sold them,—and having completed the sale and bought off the Prussians, they turned like tigers to tear them.

And on the night before the 23d of May they entered the city, like foreign invaders, and the storm began; lightning of flashing powder, the thunder of cannon, the hail of lead, the patter of blood. The spring sun broke over the cemeteries where the living fought, barricaded by the dead, over the streets where the soldiers rode up and down firing as they pleased, over the houses where women and children waited to be dragged out and murdered. It shone upon the earlier and happier victims who died fighting, upon the cold-blooded massacres of citizens lined up in groups against the walls of their homes, shot and thrown in heaps, upon the butcheries of the wounded in the very hospitals, doctors and nurses shot by the side of those they tended or driven off to the bastions to await still greater suffering.

And at night the fires arose; and they who had devastated Paris threw the blame of her burning on her own children.

And then—the stakes of Satory! The midnight executions when prisoner after prisoner was led out by the lantern light, pinned to a stake, shot, buried in the trench that stretched at his feet! And the torture of mothers to make them reveal the whereabouts of their sons; the hungering and the beating of little children to make them reveal the whereabouts of their parents! The long and terrible marches from prison to prison, in the night, in the mud, in the rain, under the insults of the soldiers, under the blows of their rifle-butts, marching, falling, dying in the ditches, under the prison walls. Then the long-drawn tortures of waiting in cold and pale-lit cellars, sleeping on the water-soaked earth—yea, and blood-soaked—kept worse than rats in holes, waiting for—jutsice! The "justice" of the conqueror.

Then for months and months, the processions to the convict-ships, the gruesome journey under the shadow of the cannon over long seas to the marsh-fevered shores of Guiana, and the coral-reefed wastes of New Cale-

donia and the Isle of Pines. And there, the fiendish ingenuity of torture developed by the professional prison-keeper, year after year poisoning and crushing, till many died, and many went mad, and all were wasted in body and embittered in spirit.

With all these images before my eyes, distinct and lit with a white, awful clearness, as in the paralysis of a lightning flash,—I do not want to "love my enemies, nor let by-gones be by-gones." I do not want to be philosophical, nor preach their inclusion in the brotherhood of man. I want to *hate* them—utterly. They have the power, they have the weapons, they have the law, they have the prisons; and what they have done before they will do again, whenever and wherever people try to be rid of them. They will do it until the people become the stronger. And then—perhaps—then when they are beaten and thrown down, when they are made to understand how useless they are as they are, will be the time to think about forgiving them, and teaching them to do some useful service in the world.

The patience that we need, we who want the free community, is not patience with them, but with the stupidity and stolidity of the people, by whom our enemies enslave us, together with themselves.

I wish that every inconscient child of Labor might feel upon his head the club of power and on his wrist the chain; might see before his eyes, forever, the sacrifice of those who have hurled themselves against the barriers and broken themselves in a self-regardless endeavor to bring freedom into the world—freedom to these others who have never wanted it nor conceived it, these others who are ready slaves to do the will of tyrants upon their fellows who want to be men. If they, these wretched creatures, who live as beasts in sleep, and lend themselves to drag any load at any beggar's price, who accept their existence as an alms allowed them by a Court of Charity,—if they were once awakened—Oh, for our conscious and intending enemies there would be no very long story to tell. They might take their Bibles and read, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged," and remember the stakes of Satory, and say to themselves, "It is better to do like Judas, and buy a rope with

the price of our iniquity and go away and hang ourselves!"

Ah, but Paris failed!

Yes, Paris failed; and many another uprising of the spirit of Paris will fail, before the great insurrection comes which will *not* fail.

They will fail because the people do not demand enough, are too patient and law-abiding in their suffering, too naive not to expect good from their enemies, too nurtured in respect of power to offer resistance to the Club. They will fail because they will not attack the essential thing which is their hurt,—they will not take back the sources of life from those who have seized them, but play a stupid game of spilling their blood for the winning of a few cents wages, which will be taken away from them again, at the next economic crisis, no matter what form of political power rules them. They will fight for little things, and leave the power to precipitate the same struggle over and over in the hands of those with whom they fight. They will go on losing as much flesh and blood in every struggle as would serve to win the whole battle, did they but understand that the thing to fight for was the expropriation of the world's sources of production, and the machinery of it, and their reinvestment in the whole people.

Paris was a blow for the decentralization of political power; it must at any rate have failed (unless the other Communes of France had followed its example), because the centralized State power was too mighty for even its heroism to prevail against. But Paris failed to strike at economic tyranny, and so came short of what it could have achieved, had it possessed itself of what resources it could have had. The lesson is long in the learning, and sometimes it seems that one generation quite forgets what is taught to its predecessor; but the school is a large one, and each section has to do its own learning, probably.

We in America are still in the primer class; we have to learn the very A B C, which is that all trades, all workers, skilled or unskilled, have a common interest, and that all police clubs feel alike. That the rights of assemblage, speech, and petition, exist for none except

those who assemble in the interests of corporate bodies and political gangs, for those who have nothing to say, and nothing to petition for; that as for the rest, they may neither meet, nor talk, nor march, nor petition without feeling the club; so the best thing is to meet and march and demand—not petition—for the club will be no heavier for the one than the other. So far the people have learned not even this, being drunk with their government-school-drilled tradition that everything is done by the people and for the people, by our best of all possible governments, which is of the people. They have to learn what the people of monarchical governments know from the start, that the government is "agin' em," and they must be "agin' it."

It is a far cry from this baby lesson which the workers of America are learning, to the conception of the free community whose economic affairs shall be arranged by the groups of actual producers and distributors, eliminating the useless and harmful element now in possession of the world's capital; and whose political rights will never be embodied in useless papers, called Constitutions, which every petty city official may violate at his pleasure,—but will exist actively in the free and active personalities of its members, in their desire and determination to assert themselves.

It is a far cry from the strike of the people simply to inflict suffering on themselves, to the strike of the people which will transfer that suffering to their oppressors; from the strike which "quits" to the strike which "takes possession," from that which lays down its tools to that which takes possession of its tools and instead of absenting itself from the shops turns its masters out. But the first page of the lesson has been begun; and there is hope for more speedy learning with the acceleration of solidarity among our enemies.

The Commune went down, as many another Commune will go down. But she went down gloriously, with flashing eyes; low in the blood-spilled dust, by the wall of Père-la-Chaise her face was lifted still; and the haunting ghost of its defiant, dying light yet flickers on the wreath-hung stone. And wherever the people rise in spontane-

ous rebellion, recognizing their common brotherhood, there the light flashes out again, and the old voice cries:

They say she is dead, the Commune is dead;
That if she were living her earthquake tread
Would scatter the honeyless hornet's hive.

. . . . .

Go revel once more ye cowardly knaves
With the wantons your lusts have made,
Be drunken again on the blood of the slave,
That are slain in your shambles of trade,
But know ye this, I am not dead.

. . . . .

I am not dead, I am not dead,
I live a life intense, divine;
Yours be the days forever fled,
But all the morrows shall be mine.

THE PAST OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

By Jack Radcliffe

IS Socialism dead? Frankly, I believe it is. Since "we all' have become Socialists, "Socialism" has come to mean anything one likes, which is as much as to say nothing at all.

Looking round upon the Socialist Movement, its most outstanding feature is its utter confusion, the hopeless chaos into which it has fallen. It is divided into four Parties—Parties *pour rire,* so far as their influence upon the political life of the country is concerned—the British Socialist Party, the Independent Labour Party, and those modern "tailors of Tooley Street," the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the Socialist Labour Party. The Fabian Society, in so far as it is anything more than a dilettante middle-class mutual admiration Society, is a useful ally of capitalism, making for the continuance of class government in a "servile state."

If one reads the periodical literature of these Parties, it becomes apparent that they hate each other even more than they profess to hate the capitalists. Thus, by their mutual antagonisms, they neutralize each other, and be-

come an easy prey for their anti-Socialist opponents—or would be so, if the latter were not quite so intellectually feeble. Socialism, indeed, has been killed—by the Socialists.

If one goes back in thought to the classical days of the scientific Socialism of Marx and Engels, when our old Social Democratic Federation was young and vigorous, what a contrast is presented! Then we knew where we were. Then we had clear-cut issues and definitions presented to us, and which we, in turn, presented to others. But the fly in the ointment then—which has since caused the whole to stink—was the conception of political action. This was degenerated into mere parliamentarism which has quenched the fire of Revolutionary Socialism. Moreover, conditions have changed greatly in the last thirty years, a circumstance which our stalwart veterans do not seem able to realize.

Parliamentarism inevitably leads away from revolution and towards reform, away from a drastic change of economic system, and towards mere tinkering with effects, leaving their fundamental causes untouched.

It being impossible, as might have been expected, for uncompromising revolutionaries, who were out for the total abolition of capitalism and the wage system, to get into parliament, compromise was resorted to. This compromise could only be in one direction, towards the enemy's position and away from our own. Thus we got "Independent" Labourism with a laxity about Socialism, which has developed into a denial, by many who still call themselves Socialist, of the fundamental fact of the class-war, and a repudiation of revolutionary methods (vide J. Ramsay MacDonald's "Socialist Movement," &c.). This degeneration of the working-class movement becomes still worse as it shades off into mere Labourism, the only inspiration of which would seem to be an anæmic form of Nonconformist Christianism. Here we find it absoultely at the mercy of an utterly unscrupulous and hypocritical Liberalism which is able to fool the well-meaning sentimentalists, who are without the economic knowledge of the "materialistic" Socialists, to the top of their bent, and is always willing to buy over the self-seeking demagogues who have found, in

these conditions of the labour movement, opportunities for their own personal advancement.

All this, it need hardly be said, is eminently satisfactory from the capitalist point of view.

When we turn to the British Socialist Party—of which we once had hopes—we find a degeneration of a somewhat different kind. It is (as has been said before) more in the nature of senile decay. The B.S.P. still professes to be revolutionary, but what it means by "revolution" is difficult to understand, seeing that every direct manifestation of the revolutionary spirit is immediately denounced by the leading exponents of B. S. P'ism as "anarchism;" and, considering their constant and gross misrepresentations and abuse of Syndicalism, which is nothing more or less than the legitimate expression of those revolutionary ideas which the old S.D.F. inspired and which its successor the B.S.P. still claims to hold.

The B.S.P. "leaders" have only themselves to thank that the revolutionary spirit is expressing itself independently and apart, since they would not tolerate it within their organization. Reading "the organ of Social Democracy" week by week, it is apparent that "the Social Democracy" is becoming more and more hidebound and reactionary as time goes on.

Apart from Syndicalism, the attitude of the organ aforesaid towards the militant women's movement is as disgraceful as that of the capitalist hooligan Press. We hold no brief for "Votes for Women." Indeed, we regret that so much energy and magnificent heroism should be thrown away on so worthless a cause. When the women get the vote, as they assuredly will, they will find it of no more use to them than it is to us men. It will not solve a single problem, but it will lead to a greater mass of such mischievous legislation as we have been cursed with of late years, the purpose and effect of which will be to curtail our liberties still further in the interests of a cunning and unscrupulous master-class.

Inasmuch as the suffrage movement is merely political and not economic, inasmuch as it does not aim at the overthrow of capitalism and the wage system, it will accomplish nothing towards the solution of those social evils, the existence of which most Suffragists recognise.

But the suffrage movement is exerting a fine educative

influence on our girls and women. It is moulding the stuff of which the revolution will be made. By their militant tactics the Suffragists will assuredly gain their end. But to us it is somewhat ironical that they are by DIRECT ACTION bringing about a state of things under which they will be as impotent as the male "voting cattle" are now! From the day when the women get the vote will date the degeneration of the women's movement.

Nevertheless, the militant women are setting the men a fine example. If the men had the same courage, the same determination, and the same cohesion as the women have, we might hope to see the New Society in our own day and time. But, instead of sympathising with the militant women and trying to carry them further to something more vital and fundamental than the useless vote, and instead of endeavouring to inspire their own rank and file with the same rebellious ardour, our sluggish Socialist "leaders" join the Philistine chorus of sneering abuse and denunciation.

What will they do when the day is really at hand? Amuse themselves with competitions for the formation of "A Socialist Cabinet"? Nothing could be more strikingly significant than this. A list of representative Socialists is given in *Justice,* from which competitors are invited to "form a Cabinet." The list is a remarkable one and displays a humour no doubt unsuspected by its compiler. That it will cause the Philistine to jeer goes without saying; but it is far more calculated to move the serious, thinking Socialist to tears.

There we have it, and there we have illustrated to us in a plain, unmistakable way what is in the minds of most of these Socialists. Their great aim is parliament, and beyond parliament they cannot go. It has become an *idée fixe* with them. They dream of revolution "by act of parliament"! A Socialist Cabinet forsooth! Well, leave them to their tomfoolery; *we* have our work to do. They are "back numbers." Their Socialism is dead.

As for those silly little groups known as S.P.G.B. and S.L.P., they are our "sea-green incorruptibles," nourished on the pure milk of the doctrine; they do not count for anything serious, though they take themselves too seriously. Beyond a pretty talent for washing dirty linen

in public their activities amount to nothing. So they may safely be left to afflict the air of street corners with all the wisdom they can extract from a few penny pamphlets on what is supposed to be "Marxian Socialism," which they do not understand. *Their* Socialism is dead.

Although Socialism is dead, strangled by the Socialists, THAT for which Socialism formerly stood is not dead. The revolutionary movement, of which Socialism was once truly part and parcel, goes forward. But it is finding other channels, other modes of expression, than arid parliamentarism. It refuses to be absorbed by the dry dust of Party politics. Its channels are over the industrial field, and the whole of organized labour is everywhere, consciously or unconsciously responding to its vivifying influence. Its modes of expression are in Direct Action. It has no use for parliaments or Cabinets. It will own, administer, and direct at first hand the common wealth in the common interests of all. Thus it will brook no "rulers," and it will need no "government." It will fructify in Communism, not Collectivism. And its name to-day is Syndicalism.

Socialism is dead!

The Syndicalist, London.

AUGUST STRINDBERG

By Max Baginski

THE American reading public is gradually becoming acquainted with the writers who in the last decades of the XIX. Century had impressed the stamp of their aggressive and passionate spirit upon the thought of Europe. One of the most powerful of them—undoubtedly the most passionate—is August Strindberg, whose works are now beginning to be issued by American publishing houses.

The personality of Strindberg is not to be compressed within a definition; he cannot be classified. One must follow him step by step in his Protean changes that demolished old ideas and ideals to make room for ever new ones, in order to reach some approximation of the man and his genius. He is like Chaos, from whom fiery comets ever blaze forth, to be swallowed in the twilight preceding the birth of new worlds.

In his childhood, Strindberg suffered much humiliation and scorn as a result of the poverty of his parents and their doubtful moral and social position in the eyes of respectability. As a youth he grew conscious that he belonged to the lower classes, to the mob. During the unveiling of the statue of Karl XII. at Stockholm a riot broke out in the streets of the city. Money for the monument had been collected from the people, but the latter were excluded from participation in the festivities. Young Strindberg, who had already tried his luck as teacher and actor—without either success or satisfaction to himself—was at the time at the house party of a friendly physician. The commotion outside attracted the attention of the guests, and some one present inquired what was the matter. The reply came from a professor: "It is the noise of the mob."

Intensely moved, Strindberg left the party and rushed into the street to join the "noisy mob." Of this incident Strindberg later wrote in one of his autobiographical books:

"The mob? The words rang in his ears, whilst he walked down the street. The mob! They were his mother's former schoolfellows, and even his own pupils; they were the dark background which made the light and comfort effective in the place he had just left. He felt like a deserter, as if he had done wrong in working his way up."

At that period he looked upon palaces, churches, barracks, city streets, in which people sought to deceive and cheat each other in so-called honest dealing, as the hated symbols of a society whose foundation is based on social injustice and lying morality.

His entrance into the field of authorship was the signal for an attack upon these foundations.

"The Red Room," a novel, called down upon his head the wrath and hatred of the respectability of Sweden. The work is the grimmest satire on the impenetrable dullness of the official, governmental marionettes, of religion, patriotism, marriage, parliament, of the press and the critics, of charity and the uplift movements. The book is, in its broader features, quite timely in regard to conditions prevalent to-day in this country. Especially up to date is the remarkable description of the

"well-meaning persons" who promote banking and loan institutions to afford the people easy credit and with whom later on the deposits of the poor mysteriously disappear, a la Henry Siegel methods.

The last sentence in "The Red Room" contains the following satirical psychologic characterization, in the mouth of the scoffer, Borg, who declares matrimony to be an impossibility from the point of view of natural science:

"He laid down the proposition that the moment must come when every subject had been discussed, when each partner knew every thought and opinion of the other, and when absolute silence was bound to reign."

A veritable storm of persecution broke loose against Strindberg at the publication of his twelve short stories appearing under the title of "Married." The conservative press agreed that the proper place for the author was a prison. The Queen of Sweden expressed the opinion that the book was highly indecent and a menace to the good morals of the land. Because of a passage in one of the stories called "The Reward of Virtue," Strindberg was indicted for blasphemy, but the court acquitted him.

The book represents a description of the psychologic, social and economic reasons that contribute to make marriage a failure. Virtue and abstinence, so much praised for the benefit of the youth, fare badly in the book. In their struggle against human nature, the latter conquers; but its victory is won at the cost of the individual who, tied in the straitjacket of morality that nature constantly seeks to burst, is crippled and sometimes destroyed.

From the liberals, Strindberg received encouragement and approval. As a protest against his persecution by the courts and public opinion, they staged his play, "Lucky Pehr." The theatre echoed with cheers for the author, but the latter found that he was "no good" as a "great" man. "I can never learn to believe in cheers," he wrote; "they cheer to-day and booh to-morrow."

"Lucky Pehr" is a fairy play. Pehr goes forth in quest of happiness, but he finds it neither in power nor in wealth, for each of these has its own limitations and

tyrannical conventionality. The powerful cannot make the people free and happy, because his power is based on the submission of his fellowmen. Out of their slavery are forged chains that keep him in bondage.

The environment and atmosphere of Strindberg's parental home and of the school, through which he is driven as through purgatory, is presented to us in "The Son of a Servant." In three rooms there live the parents with their seven children; occasionally the servants also share the same quarters. The furniture consists chiefly of beds and cradles. In this work the married man, the husband, already appears in the role which is later on elaborated in "The Father":

"This is the father's thankless position in the family, to be everybody's breadwinner, everybody's enemy. * * * Family, thou art the home of all social vices * * * and the hell of the children."

The woman characters of Strindberg—that gave him the name of woman hater—appear in their most definite form in "The Father," "Countess Julia," "Comrades," and "Creditors." The "female vampire" is pictured in these plays with great artistic *finesse*. She makes use of the man as a means to an end; she is false and treacherous, exploits his ideas and talents, and feeds, spider like, on his very life-blood, finally to cast him aside when developments become catastrophic.

Laura, in "The Father," says to her husband, after she had driven him mad by deliberately instilling in him the poison of doubt as to the fatherhood of his child: "Now you have fulfilled your function as an unfortunately necessary father and breadwinner; now you are not needed any longer, and you must go. You must go, since you have realized that my intellect is as strong as my will and since you will not stay to acknowledge it."

It is these dramas that earned Strindberg European fame. His women stood out in strong relief and challenged passionate attitude for or against, when compared with the Nora types of Ibsen. These to Strindberg were unbearable by-products of modern feminism. He called Ibsen the "Norwegian bluestocking."

In Germany and France, Strindberg met enthusiastic admiration among the younger authors. His sojourn in

Berlin and Paris brought great triumph to his art. In Paris were staged his dramas, meeting with great financial success. But suddenly the author disappears from the circles that hailed him as the greatest naturalistic writer. He is undergoing a great change; he does not want any more to creep into the soul of his fellowmen, to flay them alive for the purpose of writing. He retires to the life of a hermit, devotes himself to chemistry studies, to physics and astronomy,—sciences which in his frenzied thirst for knowledge, are transformed into astrology and alchemy. His portraits grace the show windows of Paris, proclaiming him a new liberator. Directors of theatres vie with each other in sending him invitations, the critics plead for interviews—but Strindberg remains deaf to their call. He has burned the bridges behind him; he lives obscurely in a little room of an unknown hotel, where he is immersed in his experiments to fathom the secrets of nature, of the origin of life itself. The elements war against him; fire and sharp acids cause many mishaps and burn his hands. Added to these misfortunes are bills for rent and food, while Strindberg is penniless, the sources of his income cut off by his disappearance. Finally, both his hands affected by blood poison, feeling wretched and miserable, Strindberg is conveyed to Hospital St. Louis.

Here begins the transformation of Strindberg from an atheistic Saulus to a believing Paulus. But before the completion of this change, he still has to pass through a hell tortured by horrible hallucinations. The persecution mania holds him fast in its grip; he is obsessed by the delusion that his former friends seek his life, plot to strangle him, torture him with electric batteries, and are about to kill him. And over all this horror stretches ominously the hand of "the invisible power" that punishes him because he had deserted his wife and child when he faced the alternative of either devoting his life to his family or serving science.

This period of Strindberg's life is mirrored in "Inferno." He describes it like an impartial observer, with an artistic accuracy that reminds one of Poe. To the same period belong also the works that picture the crises of his mental life: "Legends," "To Damascus," and "Advent," the two last being plays.

Strindberg returns to Sweden, his spirit now flowing in calmer channels. His acquaintance with the works of Swedenborg proved, he informs us, clarifying in regard to much that was formerly hidden and obscure to him.

A summing up of his ideas about religion, the world, and life, as developed after the crisis of "Inferno," is to be found in his later work, *Das Blau-Buch*. In this he attacks atheists and freethinkers with as much venom as he had formerly fought against the good Christians and believers. He impresses into the service of his faith the dying Voltaire and Heinrich Heine, and even the living Goethe.

Notwithstanding all this, however, official Christianity will not be able to exploit Strindberg's "conversion" for its own purposes. His faith, like everything he wrote, had its own individual note. Religion, Church, and Church politics were to him very different matters. In a certain place he protests against being labeled a Catholic. If he is to be counted in the fold, he himself declares, it would be most fitting to call him a Swedenborgian.

Whatever the religious faith of Strindberg in the declining years of his life, he has given us much that is valuable during his heroic pilgrimage through life, leaving us a rich heritage in the numerous works of his great creative genius.*

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